

Maryland Environmental Service requests termination of contract services for  
Centreville's wastewater irrigation facility.

May 12, 2005 – Maryland Environmental Service (MES) notified the Town of Centreville yesterday of their desire to terminate contract services related to the Town's wastewater irrigation system. The news was delivered to the Town in a meeting with Steve Tomczewski, Executive Director for the Environmental Operations Group of MES, Rhody Holthaus, Chief, Water and Wastewater Operations and Town Manager, Royden N. Powell, III. Powell said, "This announcement comes as a complete surprise to the Town, especially after a series of recent meetings and letters from MDE providing clarification on how to interpret various permit requirements." The MES request was detailed in a letter to Powell presented at the end of the meeting.

Citing concerns about "lack of clear operating guidance" from the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) and "the evolving nature of the rules and their lack of clarity for operating the spray field", MES has requested to be relieved of their current agreement for spray field operations within 30 days or the Town will face termination of the entire agreement between MES and the Town as of July 1, 2005. MES operates Centreville's water and wastewater systems under an agreement developed last October.

The Town plans to respond to MES's letter immediately in an attempt to resolve the issue. "Giving the Town just 30 days notice to find a new operator is not reasonable and places us in an extremely difficult situation," says Powell. "We had been relying on the technical and professional capacity of MES to restore the public's trust in our wastewater system and they have been doing an outstanding job. Now we're right back where we started." In a telephone conversation with Powell late yesterday, MDE offered to provide any additional clarification MES feels they need to operate the spray field.

###